

Serial No. 10/678,496
Attorney Docket No. 32162256.2392

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present Application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks/arguments. Claims 1-21 were originally filed, and claims 6-11 were withdrawn in response to the Restriction Requirement, and have now been canceled. Claims 1-5 and 18-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103. The Examiner has indicated that claims 12-17 recite allowable subject matter. Thus, independent claims 1 and 18 have been amended to include the limitations of allowed claim 12, and claims 5, 12 and 21, have been canceled. As a result, claims 1-4 and 13-20 remain pending in the present Application.

I. FORMAL MATTERS

As noted in the pending Office Action, in response to the previous Restriction Requirement, the Applicant inadvertently withdrew dependent claim 5 from consideration in the present Application. The Applicant thanks the Examiner for recognizing this error and for examining claim 5 along with the remaining pending claims. Based on this, the Applicant agrees with the Examiner that claim 5 should be pending in the present Application, and accepts the Examiner's inclusion of this claim in his present examination of the Application.

II. REJECTIONS

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-5 and 18-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly obvious over U.S. Patent No. 2,607,283 to Crank in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,888,466 to Hoffman. While the Applicant does not necessarily agree with the Examiner's rejections, to expedite the prosecution of the present Application, the Applicant has amended pending independent claims 1 and 18 to include subject matter the Examiner has indicated as allowable.

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With regard to independent claim 1, the Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitations of allowed claim 12. In addition, claims 13-17 have also been amended to depend from newly amended claim 1. Claim 5 has been canceled without prejudice since it recited a Markush group that included the embodiment recited in allowed claim 12. With regard to independent claim 18, the Applicant has amended claim 18 to also include subject matter indicated as allowable. Also, claim 21 has been canceled without prejudice since it also recited a Markush group that included the embodiment recited in allowed claim 12. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1-4 and 13-20, as amended, are not obvious in view of the cited combination of references. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the §103(a) rejection with respect to the pending claims.

III. CONCLUSION

The Applicant respectfully submits that pending claims 1-4 and 13-20 are in condition for allowance, and request a Notice of Allowability for the pending claims. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned Attorney of Record if such would expedite the prosecution of the present Application. Although no fees are believed to be due with this Amendment, if it is determined that additional fees are due, or an overcharge has occurred, please charge or credit Deposit Account No. 13-0480, referencing the Attorney Docket Number specified herein.

Respectfully submitted,

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AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

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